

not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

Golden Text.—Now is Christ risen from the dead. I Cor. 15: 20.

Lesson Thought.—Because Jesus lives we shall live also.

Home Readings

The Sealed Tomb, Matt. 27: 57-66.

Too Good to be True, Luke 24: 1-11.

The Empty Tomb, John 20: 1-10.

Christ Risen, John 20: 11-20.

Doubt Dispelled, John 20: 24-31.

Many Witnesses, Acts 2: 22-32.

Proofs of the Resurrection, I Cor. 15: 1-11.

Introduction

The order of events after the death of Jesus on the cross may be gathered by a careful examination of the several evangelists who relate the circumstances. The following narrative of the story of the burial and resurrection of Jesus based on the gospels from the Sunday-school Journal will be found very helpful in fixing the order of events.

(1) The Jews, by Pilate's permission, set a guard and sealed the entrance to the sepulchre (Matt. 27: 62-66.) This was at some time during the Sabbath. (2) At the close of the Sabbath (Saturday evening) Mary Magdalene and other women bought spices with a view to embalming the body of Jesus (Mark 16: 1.) They apparently did not know that Joseph and Nicodemus had already embalmed it (chap. 19: 39, 40.) (3) Early Sunday morning there was an earthquake; an angel of the Lord rolled away the stone from the sepulchre, and the Roman guard was smitten down (Matt. 28: 1-4.) (4) Shortly afterward—Mark says "when the sun was risen," Luke says "at early dawn"—Mary Magdalene and several other women came to the sepulchre bringing the spices which they had prepared, but found the stone rolled away and the sepulchre empty. Matthew, Mark and Luke agree that an angel or angels appeared and spoke to the woman at this time. Matthew (28: 5) says "the angel;" Mark says "a young man . . . clothed in a long white garment;" Luke says "two men . . . in dazzling apparel." They were told that Christ was risen, were invited to see where he lay, and were directed to report the facts to the disciples. (5) Mary Magdalene, as seems most probable, separating from the other women, went to bear the news to John and Peter, while the rest went to report to the other disciples at another place. (6) As these "other women" went Jesus himself appeared to them (Matt. 28: 9, 10.) (7) John and Peter, having heard Mary Magdalene's report, came in haste, and entered into the

sepulchre, and saw the linen clothes and the napkin which were left. Having seen, they went back to their own home. (8) Mary Magdalene, returning, arrived at the sepulchre after the departure of John and Peter. Looking in, she saw two angels. Having answered their question, "Woman, why weepest thou?" she turned and saw Jesus himself, but did not recognize him until he had spoken her name. He then sent her, also, to the disciples. (9) After this there are recorded six other appearances of Jesus: To the two disciples on their way to Emmaus (Luke 23: 13-31;) to Peter (Luke 24: 34; I Cor. 15: 5;) to ten of the apostles in the evening of the resurrection day at Jerusalem (verses 24-26;) to the eleven apostles, in the same place on the following Sunday night (verse 26;) to seven apostles, five of whom are named, by the sea of Galilee (chap. 21;) to the eleven apostles, and some "five hundred brethren at once," on a designated mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28: 16-20; I Cor. 15: 6;) and finally, in connection with his ascension, in Jerusalem and on the Mount of Olives (Luke 24: 50-53.) From Acts 1: 3, we learn that these various appearances, which were attended "by many infallible proofs," extended thru a period of forty days. Paul (I Cor. 15: 7, 8,) refers to two other appearances—one to James and one to himself.

The Text Explained

Verse 11. After telling the disciples of her fears, she returned and probably reached the sepulchre after Peter and John had left. After all she might be mistaken about the absence of the body, and to make certain she stoops down and looks into the tomb.

12 As if watching the body of Jesus. Their presence showed the divine hand and care. They were ministering spirits and brought that comfort to those in sorrow which none else could give.

13 She seems to have had no thought of the glorious resurrection of her Lord, and supposed that the body had been carried away by the enemies of Jesus.

14 Why did she not recognize Jesus at once? (1) Possibly as in the case of the Emmaus disciples afterward, Jesus did not at first disclose himself to her. (2) His garments were certainly not now the same as before his crucifixion. (3) She was weeping, and her tears made a veil which hid the loved features. (4) Her mind was occupied with other thoughts. She was not thinking of finding a living Jesus, but was looking for him dead. (5) Perhaps she had but vaguely looked at him or not raised her eyes at all to look into the face of the person of whose mere presence she was now conscious.

15 There really was no reason why she should weep, had she known everything. The grave was in a garden and Mary supposed that the man before her was the garden keeper. If he had taken the body away to some less honorable tomb than the new one into which Jesus had been placed because he was un-

willing to have the body in the new tomb of his master. Mary will see that the body is removed to some other place. She will assume all the responsibility.

16 He simply spoke her name in the old familiar tone, which Mary at once recognized. In this way Christ revealed himself to her.

17 The words imply that in her strong emotion she was about to clasp him. Why he restrained her cannot positively be explained. A little later he suffered the other woman to hold him by the feet. (Matt. 28: 9.) And he even told Thomas to touch him. (John 20: 27.) A correct exegesis of the passage is difficult. (1) The translation, "Touch me not," is inadequate and does not give the correct meaning. The meaning is, "hold on to," and "cling to." Jesus meant therefore that Mary should not cling to him with an earthly affection which would keep her close to his body. She was to go and tell his brethren that he was risen. (2) Mary was not to linger now in order to embrace him; that she will have opportunity to do afterward. Hasten to inform the disciples. That is the first duty. (3) Mary may have thought that Jesus is now with her to stay forever. So he was, but not in body, and she must learn that henceforth it is a spiritual, not a bodily touch. (4) The touch is not necessary to determine whether Jesus is yet clothed with a body. He has not yet ascended, and therefore is still in the flesh. (5) Jesus meant to limit the exuberance of Mary's rapture, and deprive her of the illusion that the supreme thing was to have Christ's bodily presence.

18 Leaving Jesus she hastened to obey his command and bear his message.

19, 20. No further evidence was needed to convince the disciples that their Lord had risen. They now *believed* what he had told them before the crucifixion.

The Text Applied

1. The resurrection from the tomb was the crowning act of Jesus. The following from *Peloubet* are among the lessons which this stupendous event teaches: (1) The resurrection of Jesus is the crowning proof that he is the Son of God. If he could not conquer death and come back from heaven, he could not prove that at the first he came from heaven. (2) It is the proof of immortal life beyond the grave; that death does not end all, but the soul lives after the body dies. (3) It proves that we have a living Savior, sitting on the right hand of God. (4) It proves that our Savior, who could conquer death, has power over all our enemies. (5) It is the assurance of our own resurrection, with spiritual bodies like his glorious body; all sickness, weakness, and pain gone; and with new life, new powers, new joys, beyond our brightest conception. (6) Hence it gives assurance of the recognition of our loved ones beyond the grave. (7) It takes away the darkness from the tomb, and makes it the gate of life. (8) It gives largeness and broadness to life, every-